اِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَهْدِيْ لِلَّتِيْ هِيَ اَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا كَبِيْرًا

Quran English Translation and Tafseer
Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi
Surah 104 - Al Humazah (The One Who Slanders)

سُوْرَةُ الْهُمَزَةِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

(In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate**)**

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ١

(104:1) Woe to every fault-finding backbiter; (1)

(1) The words used in the original are humazat il-lumazah. In Arabic hamz and lamz are so close in meaning that they are sometimes used as synonyms and sometimes with a little difference in the shade of meaning. But this difference is not definite and clear, for the meaning given to hamz by some Arabic speaking people themselves is given to lamz by other Arabic speaking peoples. On the contrary, the meaning given to lamz by some people is given to hamz by others. Here, since both the words appear together and the words humazat il-lumazat have been used, they give the meaning that it has become a practice with the slanderer that he insults and holds others in contempt habitually. He raises his finger and winks at one man, finds fault with the lineage and person of another, taunts one in the face and backbites another; creates differences between friends and stirs up divisions between brothers; calls the people names and satirizes and defames them.

الَّذِیۡ جَمَعَ مَالًا وَّ عَدَّدَہٗ ۲

(104-2) who amasses wealth and counts it over and again. (2)

(2) This second sentence after the first sentence by itself gives the meaning that he slanders others because of his pride of wealth. The words jama a malan for collecting money suggest the abundance of wealth; then the words counting it over and over again depict the person’s miserliness and his selfish hoarding of wealth.

یَحۡسَبُ اَنَّ مَالَہٗۤ اَخۡلَدَہٗ ۳

(104:3) He thinks that his wealth will immortalize him forever. (3)

(3) Another meaning also can be: He thinks that his wealth will make him immortal. That is, he is so engrossed in amassing wealth and counting it over and over again that he has forgotten death and he never bothers to consider that a time will come when he will have to depart from the world empty-handed, leaving everything behind.

کَلَّا لَیُنۡۢبَذَنَّ فِی الۡحُطَمَۃِ ۴

(104:4) Nay, he shall be thrown (4) into the Crusher. (5)

(4) The word in the original is la yunbadhanna. Nabdh in Arabic is used for throwing away a thing regarding it as worthless and mean. This by itself indicates that because of his wealth he thinks that he is a great man but on the Day Of Resurrection he will be hurled into Hell as a mean and contemptible object.

(5) The word hutamah in the original is from hatm, which means to smash, crush and break into pieces. Hell has been described by this epithet because it will crush and break to pieces whatever is thrown into it because of its depth and its fire.

وَ مَ ا اَدْرٰىکَ مَا الْحُطَمَۃُ ۵

(104-5) And what do you know what the Crusher is?

نَارُ اللّٰہِ الْمُوقَدَۃُ ۶

(104:6) It is the Fire [6] kindled by Allah,

(6) Nowhere else in the Quran has the fire of Hell been called the fire of Allah. Here, its ascription to Allah not only expresses its dreadfulness but it also shows how the wrath and contempt of Allah envelops those who become proud and arrogant with the worldly wealth. That is why Allah has described that fire as His own Fire into which they will be hurled.

الَّتِی تَطَّلِعُ عَلَی الْاَفْـِٕدَۃِ ۷

(104:7) the Fire that shall rise to the hearts (of criminals). [7]

(7) Tattaliu is from ittalaa, which means to climb and mount to the top, and also to be aware and informed. Afidah is plural of fuwad, which means the heart. But this word is not used for the organ which throbs in the breast, but for the seat of man’s understanding and consciousness, his feelings and desires, beliefs and thoughts, motives and intentions, Thus, one meaning of the rising of the fire to the hearts is that this fire will reach the place which is the centre of man’s evil thoughts, false beliefs, impure desires and feelings, and wicked motives and intentions. The second meaning is that the Fire of Allah will not be blind like the fire of the world, which burns up the deserving and the non-deserving alike, but it will reach the heart of every culprit and discover the nature of his crime and then punish him according to his guilt.

اِنَّہَا عَلَیۡہِمۡ مُّؤۡصَدَۃٌ ۸

(104-8) Verily it will close in upon them, [8]

(8) That is, after the culprits have been thrown into it, Hell will be closed in upon them without leaving any slit or opening anywhere, in order to choke and suffocate them.

فِى عَمَدٍ مُّمَدَّدَةٍ ۝٩

(104-9) in outstretched columns. (9)

(9) Fi amad-im-mumaddahah can have several meanings:

(1) That the gates of Hell will be closed and tall columns will be erected on them.

(2) That the culprits will be tied to the tall columns.

(3) cording to Ibn Abbas, the flames of the fire shall be rising high like tall columns.